

# THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE SOVIET STATE

## The Communist Party

by

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### INTRODUCTION

THE Soviet political system, which in the fifteenth year of its existence continues to challenge Western institutions, has now reached a point of crystallization when it may be useful to review its history, organization and internal policy.

The autocratic rule of the Romanov dynasty established in 1613 remained unchallenged until the Napoleonic wars, which brought the Russian armies in contact with the theories of nationalism and constitutionalism then ripening in Western Europe. The spiritual ferment created by this glimpse of a new world of political thought found an outlet in the abortive Decembrist revolution of 1825, organized by a handful of nobles and army officers. Far from heeding this warning, however, Nicholas I sought to crush social unrest by a policy of severe repression. The weakness of his method, which stifled political initiative without uprooting opposition, was dramatically revealed by Russia's defeat in the Crimean war, which convinced the government that the country's prestige as a great power could be restored only by internal reforms. The reign of Alexander II, who succeeded Nicholas I in 1856, was consequently marked by a series of measures designed to improve agriculture, to develop industry and to establish the rudiments of civil liberty.<sup>1</sup>

The first step toward agrarian reform was taken in 1861 with the promulgation of the Emancipation Edict, by the terms of which twenty million household and peasant serfs

received personal freedom without compensation to their former masters. The distribution of land which accompanied emancipation, however, proved unsatisfactory to the peasants, who for the most part received smaller allotments than those they had previously leased from the landowners and had to purchase land at a price usually in excess of its actual value. The ownership of land, moreover, was vested not in individual farmers, as in Western Europe, but in the village community (*mir*), which the peasants could leave only with the greatest difficulty. The peasants consequently developed little or no sense of private property and, with the exception of a small group of *kulaks*—rich peasants who had succeeded in buying land other than that assigned to the *mir*—suffered from “land-hunger,” intensified by the steady growth of the agricultural population. They regarded the Emancipation settlement as essentially unjust, and believed that the government should correct this injustice by dividing among them the estates of the gentry and the nobility.<sup>2</sup>

Despite these grievances, which constituted a potential danger to the established order, the peasants, who were for the most part illiterate, remained politically passive. Their principal spokesmen were drawn not from the village, but from the educated classes—gentry and intelligentsia—which advocated recognition of the peasants' right to land and civil liberty. This group of idealistic men and women, inspired by romantic devotion to the peasants and by a desire to go “to the people,” formed the nucleus of the Social Revolutionary party organized about 1900. The Social Revolutionaries regarded the peasants as the key-

1. For the history of Russia, 1825-1917, cf. the following works: R. Beazley, N. Forbes and G. A. Birkett, *Russia from the Varangians to the Bolsheviks* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1918); Michael Karpovich, *Imperial Russia, 1801-1917* (New York, Holt, 1932); V. O. Kluhevsky, *A History of Russia* (four volumes, New York, Dutton, 1911-1926); Bernard Pares, *A History of Russia* (second edition, New York, Knopf, 1926); *Idem.*, *Russia and Reform* (London, Constable, 1907); George Vernadsky, *A History of Russia* (revised edition, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1930); M. N. Pokrovski, *Russkaya Istoriya s Drevneishich Vremen* (Russian History since the Most Ancient Times), fifth edition, Moscow, State Publishing House, 1923. For additional works on this period, cf. the bibliographies contained in the above volumes.

2. For a more detailed analysis of the agrarian problem before the Bolshevik revolution, cf. Vera M. Dean, “Russia's Agrarian Problem,” *Foreign Policy Association, Information Service*, Vol. VI, No. 10, July 23, 1930.

stone of the Russian state, and sought to arouse them by education and propaganda to revolt against autocracy.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE RISE OF THE PROLETARIAT

Beginning with the nineties, however, the activities of the Social Revolutionaries were overshadowed by the rise of a class-conscious proletariat. Industrialization, which had made a modest start under Peter the Great, received fresh impetus after the Crimean war, when the government not only encouraged, but frequently subsidized, the construction of factories and railways and the exploitation of natural resources. Like all undeveloped countries, Russia had to finance its industry with foreign capital, imported chiefly from France, which after the conclusion of the Franco-Russian alliance in 1893 invested heavily in strategic railways, mines and other enterprises.

Russia's industrialization was fraught with far-reaching political and social consequences. The growth of industry hastened the emergence of an educated middle class, roughly divided into two groups—the "big" bourgeoisie, composed of bankers and industrialists, and the "small" bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, recruited from merchants, technical experts and the liberal professions. The "big" bourgeoisie, which enjoyed the advantages of cheap labor and of a high protective tariff, allied itself with the autocracy in demanding the preservation of order, and in turn received aid from the government for suppression of labor conflicts. By contrast the "small" bourgeoisie, which derived less tangible economic benefits from the Tsarist régime, opposed the forces of reaction and cherished a romantic longing for political liberty. While the more radical members of the intelligentsia pledged their allegiance to various revolutionary groups, the majority of the "small" bourgeoisie supported the Constitutional Democratic party (*Cadets*), led by professors and liberal landowners, which advocated universal suffrage, constitutional monarchy, and solution of the agrarian problem by expropriation of the landowners, who were to receive money compensation.

3. Cf. Katerina Breshkovskaia, *Hidden Springs of the Russian Revolution* (Stanford University, Stanford University Press, 1931), the memoirs of one of the leading figures in the Social Revolutionary party, and Vera Figner, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* (New York, International Publishers, 1927).

The rise of the middle class was paralleled by the transformation of many landless peasants, who had been absorbed by the new industries, into a class-conscious proletariat which numbered 3,000,000 on the eve of the Bolshevik coup d'état in 1917. The proletariat suffered the usual hardships of an industrial revolution—long hours of work, low wages, intolerable living conditions and brutal treatment on the part of employers and police. Deprived of all opportunity to voice their grievances through trade unions, prohibited by the government until 1906, the workers resorted to illegal "underground" organizations which eventually became affiliated with the Social Democratic party formed in 1898 by a group of radical intellectuals, notably Georgyi Plekhanov, who had popularized the writings of Marx in Russia, and Nicholai Lenin. Unlike the Social Revolutionaries, who devoted their attention mainly to the peasants, the Social Democrats concentrated their efforts on the industrial workers, whom they regarded as shock troops of the coming revolution. At the London Congress of 1903 the Social Democratic party split into two factions—the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, and the Mensheviks, among whom was Lenin's former collaborator, Leon Trotzky. The Bolsheviks, who were in a minority in Russia but had a majority at the congress, favored a thoroughgoing revolution to be effected by violent means, while the Mensheviks advocated evolutionary methods and cooperation with the bourgeoisie for the overthrow of autocracy.

The ultimate success of the Bolsheviks appears to have been determined less by their numbers, which remained relatively small until 1917, or even by their close-knit organization, than by the driving force of Lenin, who combined an iron will and a profound knowledge of economic theory with a keen sense of political expediency, and whom neither defeat nor defection among his adherents could divert from preparations for the revolution. Born in 1870 of a family of well-to-do intellectuals, Lenin early in his youth discovered a lifelong source of inspiration in the writings of Karl Marx. Arrested in 1896 for revolutionary activities, and later deported to Siberia, he utilized his

enforced leisure to analyze Russia's economic conditions in the light of Marxist doctrine. In 1900 he left the country and settled in Zürich, where he founded a newspaper, *Iskra* (The Spark), which became the organ of the Bolsheviks. Except for a brief visit to Russia during the 1905 revolution, he remained abroad until 1917, immersed in studies which often appeared academic to his followers and practically isolated from direct contact with Russian workers.

### THE 1905 REVOLUTION

The various currents of social unrest which Tsarist repression had failed to subdue converged in the revolution of 1905, precipitated by Russia's defeat in the Japanese war. This revolution reached its climax in the general strike of October 1905, which completely paralyzed the country's economic life. The government, faced by determined opposition on the part of the liberal bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the peasants, issued a manifesto which promised a number of fundamental reforms, including the establishment of a *Duma* elected by democratic suffrage and the recognition of civil liberties. The October manifesto revealed a fatal lack of unity among the revolutionaries: the liberals, while pressing for a constitution, feared further acts of terrorism and were for the most part content to accept the government's program, while the Social Democrats, who under Trotzky's leadership had organized the first Soviet<sup>4</sup> of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in St. Petersburg, demanded the overthrow of the monarchy. This divergence of aims, which created an irreparable breach between bourgeoisie and proletariat, proved the deathblow of the revolution. The army, which had meanwhile returned from the Far East, remained loyal to the government, and the country gradually returned to a state of political apathy from which it was not aroused until the industrial strikes of 1913-1914.

4. No definitive biography of Lenin has yet been published in English. The best available works are Valeriu Marcu, *Lenin* (New York, Macmillan, 1928); D. S. Mirsky, *Lenin* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1931); Leon Trotzky, *Lenin* (New York, Minton, Balch, 1925); and George Vernadsky, *Lenin, Red Dictator* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1931). For other works on this period, cf. also V. I. Lenin, *The Iskra Period* (New York, International Publishers, 1929); Leon Trotzky, *My Life* (New York, Scribners, 1930); *idem.*, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1932), Vol. I.

5. The word *soviet* means council.

The 1905 revolution, however, was not entirely barren of results. While representation in the *Duma* was practically restricted to the propertied classes, and while its powers were constantly whittled down by the autocracy, this assembly nevertheless constituted Russia's first experiment in self-government since the *zemstvos*.<sup>6</sup> The agrarian disorders of 1905, moreover, had demonstrated the danger of a property-less peasantry. By the Stolypin reforms, 1906-1910, the peasants were consequently permitted to separate themselves from the *mir* and to take personal possession of land without compensation to the community. On the eve of the World War, nearly 25 per cent of the peasants in European Russia had left the *mir* and had received individual properties.

### RUSSIA DURING THE WORLD WAR

The World War, which in Western states rallied all parties to the support of their respective governments, produced the opposite effect in Russia where, after the first outburst of patriotism, the bourgeoisie as well as the proletariat were soon alienated by the autocracy's incompetent military organization. The weak and obstinate character of Nicholas II defeated the efforts of his more able collaborators to formulate a unified policy. A series of reactionary and ignorant ministers, who were at the mercy of Court circles dominated by the monk Rasputin, Empress Alexandra's favorite, flitted rapidly across the political scene. Neither industry nor transportation proved equal to the demand for war material. All attempts of the liberal *zemstvos* and of civic organizations to supplement the government's inadequate preparations were viewed with suspicion and promptly suppressed. Hoarding of foodstuffs by the peasants, which became widespread after 1916, caused an acute food shortage in the cities, and increased dissatisfaction in the army, whose morale had been shaken by military reverses. The bourgeoisie, which had hitherto opposed extreme measures, began to advocate the overthrow of the monarchy. Bread riots in the principal cities culminated in the revolution of March 1917. The Emperor was forced to abdicate, and power passed into the hands

6. The *zemstvos* were provincial councils established in 1864, on which the nobility, the town intelligentsia and the peasants were represented, and which exercised a certain degree of autonomy with respect to education, health and road construction.



of the Provisional Government, composed of Constitutional Democrats and *zemstvo* leaders, with one Social Revolutionary, Alexander Kerensky, in its ranks.<sup>7</sup>

#### THE BOLSHEVIK COUP D'ETAT, 1917

The rule of this government of liberals who, content with political revolution, contemplated no fundamental social changes, was promptly challenged by the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies which had been simultaneously organized by Social Revolutionaries and Social Democrats, chiefly Mensheviks. The Provisional Government, undismayed by the fact that Russia lacked political experience and was then in the throes of a disastrous war, referred the solution of all pressing problems, including the land question, to a Constituent Assembly, to be elected by universal suffrage and convened in the autumn of 1917. Constitutionalism and democracy, however, conveyed no meaning to the peasants, workers and soldiers, who demanded land, bread and peace at any price. The soviets, which after Lenin's return from exile in April had been gradually converted to the Bolshevik point of view, adopted the slogan "all power to the soviets!" and advocated withdrawal from a war in which, they claimed, the proletariat was being needlessly sacrificed to selfish capitalist schemes. The disorganization of the army, which had been subjected to able Bolshevik propaganda, practically suspended military operations after June 1917. Kerensky, who had meanwhile become Prime Minister, was unable either to control the soviets or to elaborate a concrete program which would have met the demands of the masses. The bourgeoisie failed to assume the leadership in this crisis, and offered no effectual resistance to the Bolshevik coup d'état of November 1917, which established the "dictatorship of the proletariat." The new government immediately announced its intention to terminate the war, nationalized land, took possession of banks and factories, separated the church from the state and the school from the church. The Constituent Assembly, which finally convened in January 1918 after perfunctory elections, was un-

ceremoniously dissolved, despite the protests of Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries.

The authority of the Soviet government, controlled by the Bolsheviks, who assumed the name of Communist party in 1918,<sup>8</sup> was at first paramount only in Great Russia, notably the two capitals, Petrograd (rechristened Leningrad) and Moscow. No sooner had the government obtained a "respite" on the West by concluding a separate peace with Germany at Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 than it found itself confronted by several hostile "White" armies. These armies, recruited from Tsarist officers, the bourgeoisie and the old bureaucracy, and aided by Allied expeditionary forces, disputed Soviet rule in North and South Russia and in Siberia until their final defeat in 1920.<sup>9</sup> The dangers of civil war and intervention were further increased by the threatened disruption of the Russian Empire, whose two hundred races and nationalities, differing widely in education, religion and economic development, had been held together before 1914 largely by a brutal policy of "Russification."<sup>10</sup> Finland had become an independent republic in 1917; the new states of Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had been established on Russia's Western border;<sup>11</sup> Rumania, Russia's World War ally, had seized Bessarabia; White Russia, the Ukraine, the various peoples of the Caucasus had sought to erect national states with foreign assistance. The spirit of local autonomy swept in the wake of civil war.

#### FORMATION OF THE SOVIET UNION

The disintegration of the former empire was not only contrary to Soviet doctrine, which envisaged a union of the world proletariat, irrespective of national boundaries, but seriously threatened Communist plans for the economic reconstruction and indus-

8. The original name, "All-Russian Communist party (Bolsheviks)," was changed to "All-Union Communist party (Bolsheviks)" after the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1923.

9. For a detailed account of this period, cf. Louis Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs* (two volumes, New York, Cape and Smith, 1930), Vol. I, Chapters I-VIII; General William S. Graves, *America's Siberian Adventure* (New York, Cape and Smith, 1931); United States, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Russia* (2 volumes, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1931), Vol. I; A. L. P. Dennis, *The Foreign Policies of Soviet Russia* (New York, Dutton, 1924).

10. The population of the Soviet Union is at present composed as follows: Russians, 52.9 per cent; Ukrainians, 21.2 per cent; White Russians, 3.2 per cent; Kazaks, 2.7 per cent; Uzbeks, 2.6 per cent; Tartars, 2 per cent; Jews, 1.8 per cent; Georgians, 1.2 per cent; Azerbaidjan Turks, 1.2 per cent; Armenians, 1.1 per cent. Other racial and national groups constitute less than one per cent of the total population. American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, *Economic Handbook of the Soviet Union* (New York, 1931), p. 3.

7. For a study of Russia's political and social conditions on the eve of the March 1917 revolution, cf. Michael T. Florinsky, *The End of the Russian Empire* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1931).

trialization of the country. This tendency had been partially stemmed in 1918 by the "free and voluntary union" of "the laboring classes of all nationalities" of Great Russia in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, which became the nucleus of the future Soviet Union. The danger of territorial break-up was further lessened in 1920, when White Russia and the Ukraine, which had failed to secure independence, concluded treaties providing for military and economic union with the R.S.F.S.R. Similar agreements with the R.S.F.S.R. were signed in 1921 by Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaidjan which, a year later, jointly organized the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. The Communist party, however, believed that the political bonds uniting the four soviet socialist republics were not yet sufficiently close. At the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets in 1922, Iosif Stalin, then People's Commissar for Nationalities, consequently urged the formation of a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on the ground

that economic reconstruction and the danger of capitalist attack necessitated a strong centralized government. The congress promptly adopted a declaration and a treaty of union, both of which were ratified by the first All-Union Congress of Soviets on December 22, 1922, and were promulgated on July 6, 1923.<sup>12</sup> This federation, originally composed of the R.S.F.S.R., White Russia, the Ukraine and the Transcaucasian S.S.R., was subsequently enlarged by the admission of the Turkmen and Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republics in 1925, and of Tadjikistan in 1929. The territories of the Russian Empire were thus united in "the first workers' republic of the world," from whose name all reference to its predominantly Russian character had been intentionally omitted.

The treaty of 1923, which is also the constitution of the U.S.S.R., established a federation now composed of seven Union republics whose respective territory, population and principal administrative divisions are shown in the following table:<sup>13</sup>

### The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics<sup>14</sup>

| Union Republics              | Area<br>(square kilometers) | Population  | Autonomous |           |         |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|-----------|---------|
|                              |                             |             | Republics  | Republics | Regions |
| Russian S.F.S.R. ....        | 19,667,900                  | 110,932,500 | ....       | 11        | 15      |
| White Russian S.S.R. ....    | 126,800                     | 5,246,400   | ....       | ....      | ....    |
| Ukrainian S.S.R. ....        | 452,000                     | 31,403,200  | ....       | 1*        | ....    |
| Transcaucasian S.F.S.R. .... | 185,500                     | 6,426,700   | 3†         | 3         | 2       |
| Uzbek S.S.R. ....            | 176,100                     | 4,685,400   | ....       | ....      | ....    |
| Turkmen S.S.R. ....          | 491,200                     | 1,137,900   | ....       | ....      | ....    |
| Tadjik S.S.R. ....           | 141,600                     | 1,174,100   | ....       | ....      | 1       |
|                              | 21,241,100                  | 161,006,200 | 3          | 15        | 18      |

\*Moldavia.

†Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaidjan.

By the terms of the constitution, the Union government is entrusted not only with powers usually reserved to the central organs of a federation—conduct of foreign affairs, national defense, administration of the Union budget—but controls foreign and internal trade, and is authorized to establish a general plan of national economy, to

formulate the general principles of education, to issue fundamental labor laws and to define the principles governing the development and use of land. These powers are vested in the All-Union Congress of Soviets which, according to the constitution, exercises "supreme authority." In practice, however, the Congress delegates its legislative

11. Cf. M. W. Graham, "Security in the Baltic States," *Foreign Policy Reports*, Vol. VII, No. 25, February 17, 1932.

12. For the Russian text of the declaration and the treaty of union, cf. Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, *Sbornik Postanovlenii i Rasporiazhenii Raboche-Krestianskovo Pravitelstva S.S.S.R.* (Collection of Decrees and Regulations of the Workers' and Peasants' Government of the U.S.S.R.), Moscow, 1923, No. 1, p. 16. For an English text of these documents, cf. Walter R. Batsell, *Soviet Rule in Russia* (New York, Macmillan, 1928), p. 300. Since 1923 the laws of the Soviet Union have been published annually in *Sobranie Zakonov i Rasporiazhenii Raboche-Krestianskovo Pravitelstva S.S.S.R.* (Collection of Laws and Regulations of the Workers' and Peasants' Government of the U.S.S.R.), which appears in two parts, the first part containing laws and decrees, while the second contains administrative regulations and treaties with foreign states.

13. *Sovetskoe Stroitelstvo* (Soviet Construction), a monthly magazine published by the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R., December 1930, p. 39.

14. The autonomous republics which are found in the R.S.F.S.R., the Ukrainian S.S.R. and the Transcaucasian S.F.S.R. are little more than administrative divisions established on an ethnographic basis. While these republics enjoy a considerable degree of cultural autonomy, they are politically and economically subordinated to the government of the Union republic in which they are situated, and ultimately to the government of the U.S.S.R. The autonomous regions which are found in the R.S.F.S.R., the Transcaucasian S.S.R. and the Tadjik S.S.R. occupy an even less important position in the structure of the Union, and for the most part serve merely as organs of local administration.

powers to a Central Executive Committee which it elects, and its executive powers to a Council of People's Commissars, appointed by the Central Executive Committee. The Union republics, whose respective governments are similar to that of the Union, with a congress, central executive committee and council of people's commissars, retain the right of "free withdrawal" from the Union, and sovereign authority over all matters not specifically reserved to the federal organs, including the administration of justice, health, education and social welfare. Despite this provision, all activities of the republics must conform with the policies of the Union government and the Communist party, and decrees of republican organs which infringe on the Union constitution may be repealed by the All-Union Congress.

The political centralization of the Union, which has been denounced by some critics as another form of "Russification," is justified by Soviet spokesmen on the ground that while all national groups have a right to self-determination, this right must always be subordinated to the interests of the class struggle, which demands a centralized government during the period of socialism.<sup>15</sup> The Communist party, however, has always maintained that centralization should be "democratic" in character and should be accompanied by a wide degree of cultural autonomy. Unlike the Tsarist régime, the Soviet government encourages every national group, no matter how small, to develop its own language and literature, in the hope that education will strengthen the conscious-

ness of proletarian solidarity. Obscure languages have been revived and transcribed, alphabets have been devised for dialects which formerly possessed no written literature, native languages have been introduced in the schools, courts and government institutions of various regions, and an effort has been made to select local officials from the native population. This policy which, according to Stalin, will facilitate the eventual assimilation of proletarian groups irrespective of nationality, has hitherto been hampered, on the one hand, by the chauvinism of the Great Russians, who demand the "liquidation" of all national cultures and the adoption of a single language for the whole Union and, on the other, by a drift toward local "nationalism" on the part of national groups in which "petty bourgeois" elements retain considerable influence. At the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist party in 1930, Stalin denounced both tendencies as deviations from the "party line" and demanded their eradication by the party.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the government's efforts to equalize the economic and cultural opportunities of the national groups composing the Union, the R. S. F. S. R., with ninety per cent of the country's territory and sixty-eight per cent of its population, continues to occupy a dominant position in the federation, while the Great Russians, who form sixty-five per cent of the Communist party, enjoy a marked preponderance in the federal administration and not infrequently display toward less advanced nationalities an attitude similar to that of the "white man's burden."

## THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The political system established by the 1923 treaty has been, at one and the same time, denounced as a ruthless dictatorship and acclaimed as the only real democracy in the world. No general conclusions regarding the character of the Soviet government can be reached, however, without a preliminary analysis of the theory, organization and functions of the Communist party, which occupies a pivotal position in the Soviet state.<sup>17</sup>

Russian communism, while daily adapted to the needs of the Soviet Union by timely interpretation, continues to derive its theoretical content from the works of Lenin,<sup>18</sup> which in turn are based on those of Karl Marx and his collaborator, Friedrich Engels. Lenin's

15. Cf. V. I. Lenin, *Isbrannye Statyi po Nazionalnomu Voprosu* (Selected Articles on the National Question), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1925; Iosif V. Stalin, *Nazionalnye Momenty v Partynom i Gosudarstvennom Stroitelstve* (National Questions in Party and State Construction), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1925.

16. All-Union Communist Party, *Shestnadzatyj Syezd Vsesoyuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii* (Sixteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party), Sienographic Report, Moscow, State Publishing House, 1930, p. 54-57. The position of national minorities in the Soviet Union may be discussed in a subsequent issue of *Foreign Policy Reports*.

17. For the official history of the All-Union Communist party, cf. Yemelyan Yaroslavsky, editor, *Istoriya VKP* (History of the All-Union Communist Party), four volumes, Moscow, State Publishing House, 1926-1930. Cf. also, Gregorii Zinovyev, *Istoriya Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii* (History of the Russian Communist Party), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1923.

18. The first edition of Lenin's works, begun in 1920 and completed in 1926, consists of twenty volumes, published by the State Publishing House as *Sobranie Sochineniy* (Collected Works). A second edition, which includes posthumous and hitherto unpublished material, known as *Sochineniya* (Works),



principal contribution to political theory was not the introduction of new concepts, but his re-interpretation of Marxism, which he rescued from the sterile discussions of Marxist Socialists, and his practical application of a doctrine originally devised for highly industrialized states to a country predominantly agricultural. The essential features of a workers' state may be found in Marx and Engels. It remained for Lenin to translate theory into action.

### MARXIST POLITICAL THEORY

Unlike Hegel, who viewed the state as a mystical entity, the product of "the general progress of the human mind," Marx believed that the character of the state is determined primarily by the existing "material forces of production." The development of these forces, which shape not only the economic, but the social and political structure of society, offers, according to Marx, the principal clue to the understanding of history. The forces of production, however, are not static: they undergo constant change, and eventually conflict with existing property relations, within whose framework they have hitherto developed, but which now act as intolerable fetters. This conflict precipitates a revolution, in the course of which the entire structure of society is eventually transformed.<sup>19</sup>

Applying Hegel's dialectical method to the analysis of social problems, Marx argued that history consists of class struggles, each social system, based on existing forces of production, creating an antithesis by which it is ultimately destroyed. Throughout the ages, he contended, freeman and slave, baron and serf, burgess and journeyman—"oppressor and oppressed"—have been arrayed each against the other.<sup>20</sup> The capitalist system, it-

self founded on the ruins of feudalism, merely intensifies the class struggle by dividing society into two irreconcilable camps—the bourgeoisie, which owns the means of production, and the proletarians, who must sell their labor to gain a precarious livelihood. Capitalism, the thesis, calls into being its antithesis, organized labor, by introducing collective methods of production, strict industrial discipline and universal literacy.<sup>21</sup> The establishment of large-scale industry, the expansion of commerce and navigation, the struggle of industrialized states for markets and raw materials, all tend to concentrate economic and political power in the hands of a few great capitalists, while the ranks of the proletariat are constantly swelled by the impoverishment of the lower middle class. Despite its power, however, the bourgeoisie fails "to cope with the abundance of the wealth which it has created,"<sup>22</sup> and proves unable, during recurring periods of overproduction and unemployment, to provide security "for its slaves even within the confines of their slavish existence."<sup>23</sup> The proletarians, who "have nothing to lose but their chains," cannot hope to alter existing conditions by other than violent means. To seize the political machinery is not sufficient: the workers, under the leadership of their vanguard, the Communist party, must abolish the economic conditions which give rise to capitalism—private property and the exploitation of labor.<sup>24</sup> "The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."<sup>25</sup> The capitalist system is supplanted by its antithesis, the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Out of this conflict, according to Marx, a final synthesis—classless society—is evolved, with whose establishment "pre-history ends and history begins."

### THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

The appearance of a classless society, which is synonymous with communism, is preceded, according to Marx and Lenin, by

was begun by the Lenin Institute in Moscow in 1926, and will consist of twenty-five volumes when completed. A translation of the second edition, authorized by the Lenin Institute, is now in progress under the auspices of International Publishers, New York. Current bibliographies of all publications relating to Lenin and Leninism are contained in *Lenintana*, published annually by the Lenin Institute. Moreover, a number of Soviet periodicals, of which the fortnightly *Bolshevik* is the most important, publish articles devoted to interpretation of Lenin's writings. The outstanding exposition of Lenin's doctrines is found in Josif V. Stalin, *Leninism* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1928). Cf. also Mirsky, *Lenin*, cited, p. 191 et seq., and Max Eastman, *Marx, Lenin and the Revolution* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1926).

19. For Marx's only direct statement of the materialist conception of history, cf. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Author's Preface), translated from the second German edition by N. I. Stone (New York, International Library Publishing Company, 1904). Cf. also, N. I. Bukharin, *Historical Materialism* (New York, International Publishers, 1925).

20. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York, International Publishers, 1930).

21. Karl Marx, *Capital, A Critique of Political Economy*, translated from the fourth German edition by Eden and Cedar Paul (two volumes, New York, Dutton, 1930), Vol. II, p. 846; V. I. Lenin, *Gosudarstvo i Revoliutzia* (The State and Revolution), Petrograd, "Life and Science," p. 94-95. For an English translation of the latter work, cf. V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution* (London, Communist Party of Great Britain, 1925).

22. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, cited.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*

25. Marx, *Capital*, cited, p. 846-847.

a transition period known as socialism, when the dictatorship of the proletariat gradually socializes natural resources and means of production, and may use all means at its disposal, including violence, to extirpate the last remnants of capitalism. During this period which, it is expected, will be marked by bitter struggles between "a dying capitalism and a communism which is being born,"<sup>26</sup> the state, conceived primarily as an instrument of the ruling class, will continue to exist. Only when classes have been completely destroyed will the state become obsolete and slowly "wither away," until it is relegated, in Engels' phrase, to the museum of antiquities, along with the bronze axe and the spinning-wheel.<sup>27</sup> Economic inequalities between intellectual work and manual labor will likewise persist under socialism; consequently goods will be distributed among the citizens not according to need, but on the basis of work actually performed.<sup>28</sup>

Both Marx and Lenin argued that the dictatorship of the proletariat, while resorting to compulsion, will differ from its predecessor, the bourgeois state, in one important particular: in contrast to the latter, where a majority, the proletariat, had been oppressed by a minority, the former will organize the masses of the people for the oppression of a small group of exploiters. The workers' state, they claimed, will thus be more truly democratic than so-called Western democracies where legal provisions guaranteeing liberty and equality to workers and employers alike are nullified in practice by the control which the propertied classes exercise over the schools, the courts, the press and the ballot-box.<sup>29</sup> Nor is the "democratic" character of the dictatorship of the proletariat modified, in their opinion, by the restrictions which it places on the freedom, not only of former exploiters, but even of the ruling class. These restrictions are regarded as a temporary expedient, which will be abandoned at the termination of the class struggle.<sup>30</sup>

Neither Marx, nor Lenin before 1917, at-

tempted to describe the political structure of the socialist state in any detail, beyond referring in laudatory terms to the type of government established by the Paris Commune of 1871, which both regarded as the first step toward proletarian revolution.<sup>31</sup> Marx expressed particular enthusiasm regarding the fact that the Commune had been "not a parliamentary, but a business corporation," combining executive and legislative functions and that deputies had been selected not for their political views but for their technical qualifications. Lenin likewise indicated a preference for a state organized on the model of a business enterprise, in which the class of professional "rulers"—civil servants and politicians—would be rapidly replaced by technical experts selected by the laboring masses, in which all public functions would be simplified and brought to the level of the average citizen's capacity, and whose defense would be entrusted to an army drawn exclusively from the proletariat.<sup>32</sup>

The Marxist conception of political organization in the "classless" society which will succeed socialism has as yet been even less definitely formulated. Inequality between intellectual and physical labor will presumably disappear, production will be greatly expanded, and social wealth will be distributed on the principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."<sup>33</sup> The population, trained in the methods of collective production, will learn to observe the elementary rules of collective life, and the machinery of the state, designed primarily for compulsion, will be discarded in favor of unqualified freedom and equality.<sup>34</sup> National barriers will disappear as proletarian revolution spreads from state to state, and the proletariat of the world, liberated from the capitalist yoke, will unite in one vast community of producers.<sup>35</sup>

#### MARXISM AND THE SOVIET "CLASS" STATE

The development of the Soviet state during the fourteen years of its existence has, on the whole, followed the course indicated by

26. V. I. Lenin, "Economics and Politics During the Period of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," *Sochineniya*, cited, Vol. XV, p. 347.

27. *Ibid.*, *Gosudarstvo i Revoliutsia*, cited, p. 16.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

30. Program of the All-Russian Communist Party, *Vosmoi S'ezd Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii* (Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party), March 18-23, 1919 (Stenographic Report, Moscow, "Kommunist," 1919), p. 341.

31. Karl Marx, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Frankreich* (Berlin-Wilmersdorf, Die Aktion, 1919); Lenin, *Sochineniya*, cited, Vol. XII, p. 163.

32. Lenin, *Gosudarstvo i Revoliutsia*, cited, p. 46.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

35. No attempt is made in this report to give an analysis of the economic theories of Marxism.



Marxist doctrine. The dictatorship of the proletariat, controlled by the Communist party, has socialized industry and over sixty per cent of agriculture, and has transformed the state into a vast business enterprise operated by a hierarchy of soviets which combine executive and legislative powers. During this period, regarded as transitional, the class struggle, far from abating, has been intensified by the sharp distinction drawn between four main social classes: the proletariat—workers and “poor” peasants; the “middle” peasants, potential allies of the proletariat, who have not yet been entirely won over to the socialist cause; employees and professional men, drawn chiefly from the old intelligentsia; and the former “exploiters”—aristocrats, bourgeoisie, private traders, priests and, since 1930, *kulaks*—who are known as the “disfranchised” (*lishentzi*).

The proletariat, composed of factory workers and farm laborers, is recognized as the ruling class, and is accorded various privileges with respect to food rations, housing, medical aid, recreation and education. This class, however, has not yet produced its own intelligentsia, and the government has consequently been forced to rely on the services of “bourgeois” technical experts, the majority of whom are non-Communists, and who until recently were suspected of nurturing counter-revolutionary sentiments. Distrust of the technical intelligentsia weighed like a millstone on Soviet industry: experts whose tasks called for the greatest initiative hesitated to make important decisions which, if unsuccessful for technical or other reasons, might lead to prosecution for counter-revolutionary crimes, and eventual imprisonment, exile or death. Stalin attempted to remedy this situation in June 1931, when he declared that the government should henceforth seek not to suppress but to attract the technical experts who, in his opinion, were no longer as hostile to the Soviet régime as in the past. “It would be stupid and senseless,” he said, “if we were now to look upon practically every engineer of the old school as if he were a potential criminal or ‘wrecker.’”<sup>36</sup> Following Stalin’s speech, a large number of engineers accused or convicted of

counter-revolutionary activities were released from prison and encouraged to resume their work, with assurance that they would not be willfully prosecuted for technical errors. While many specialists now enjoy a standard of living equal or even superior to that of the workers and are urged to display greater initiative, they remain for the most part servants, rather than collaborators, of the proletariat. Finally, the “disfranchised” have been penalized for their connection with the Tsarist régime by deprivation of civic rights and social ostracism: they and their older children are practically barred from active participation in Soviet life and are doomed, as a class, to slow extinction.

This class demarcation which, according to Western critics, is the direct antithesis of democracy, is regarded by leading Communists as an inevitable corollary of the transition period, which must witness the final destruction of capitalist elements both in the economic system and in “the consciousness of men.” Communist spokesmen declare that the progress of economic planning and the consequent growth of socialism have already mitigated the class struggle, and predict the abolition of all classes under the second Five-Year Plan, scheduled to end in 1937. The fundamental political problem of the second Five-Year Plan, in their opinion, will be “the transformation of all the working population of the country into conscious and active builders of a classless socialist society.” The “liquidation” of classes, however, will temporarily require an increase in the powers of the proletarian state,<sup>37</sup> which apparently is not yet ready to “wither away.”

#### LIBERTY UNDER THE SOVIETS

The dictatorship of the proletariat, as prophesied by Marx and Lenin, has not abandoned the use of force during the period of socialism, and the rights of all individuals, irrespective of class, have been subordinated to collective interests as interpreted by the Communist party. A vigilant secret police is charged with the task of checking all attempts to overthrow or openly criticize the government. Workers and technical experts are subject to “mobilization” and may be transferred at short notice from one weak

36. Cf. Stalin’s speech on “New Economic Problems,” *The Soviet Union Review*, July-August 1931, p. 152. The status of Soviet engineers and technical experts may be discussed in greater detail in a subsequent report on Soviet industry.

37. Cf. report on the second Five-Year Plan, by Vyacheslav Molotov, president of the Council of People’s Commissars of the U.S.S.R., at the Seventeenth Conference of the All-Union Communist Party, February 4, 1932, *Izvestia*, February 5, 1932.

"sector" of the industrial or agricultural "front" to another.<sup>38</sup> While Soviet legislation permits the existence of religious associations of all sects and denominations, in practice religious groups constantly encounter serious obstacles to the prosecution of their activities. The right of association is granted only to professional or social groups which have the government's approval, and attempts to form non-Communist political organizations or even independent Communist factions are promptly suppressed. The expression of unorthodox political or economic views is barred in schools and universities. The press, the radio, the publication of books, are controlled solely by the government. Even literature and art are judged less by their intrinsic quality than by their willingness to depict the class struggle.

Stifling as these restrictions on individual liberty may appear to Western observers, they are justified in Soviet opinion by the exigencies of the class struggle and the wartime tension resulting from the application of the Five-Year Plan. It should be noted, moreover, that liberty as conceived in Western states played little or no part in the pre-revolutionary life of the Russian proletariat. The sense of individual dignity which the West inherited from the Renaissance and the Reformation was practically unknown to the Russian masses, brought up in a tradition of Byzantine subservience to autocracy and orthodoxy. Far from resenting the absence of rights they had never enjoyed, the workers now derive a real sense of power from the economic benefits which they receive and from their participation in innumerable conferences and elections. Furthermore, while even the workers must abstain from criticism of the government and the Communist party, they are encouraged to flay economic shortcomings under the guise of "self-criticism."

#### COMMUNISM AND THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM

While the structure of the Soviet state thus embodies the principal features of Marxism, the special problems of the Soviet Union have necessitated considerable modification of Marxist doctrine. Of the various modifications introduced by Lenin and his

successor, Iosif Stalin, none has provoked such bitter controversy within the Communist party as that concerned with the solution of Russia's agrarian problem. Convinced that the proletarian revolution would first occur not in a highly industrialized state, as predicted by Marx, but in a state where capitalism was weakest, Lenin did not hesitate to proclaim the dictatorship of the proletariat in a country eighty per cent of whose population was composed of peasants who desired to obtain private ownership of land. He clearly perceived, however, that the rule of the proletariat—workers and farm laborers—could be successfully maintained in Russia only with the co-operation of the "middle" peasant (*seredniak*), distinguished from the so-called rich peasant (*kulak*) by the fact that he is not an exploiter of labor.<sup>39</sup>

To achieve this end, Lenin advocated the industrialization and voluntary collectivization of agriculture which, in his opinion, would not only raise agrarian productivity, but create an identity of interests between workers and peasants, and exterminate the seeds of capitalism in the village.<sup>40</sup> The Communist party, however, was divided as to the policy best calculated to secure peasant participation in this program. Trotsky who, after Lenin's death in 1924, feared that the concessions granted to the peasants by the New Economic Policy would consolidate agrarian capitalism, urged drastic measures of repression against the *kulaks*, as well as intensive collectivization.<sup>41</sup> Stalin, Secretary-General of the party, contended in 1927 that Trotsky's policy, which he denounced as "Left Opposition," was premature, and would merely foment class war in the villages. Nevertheless, with the introduction of the Five-Year Plan in 1928, Stalin sought to hasten collectivization and to restrict *kulak* activities by methods strikingly similar to those advocated by the exiled Trotsky. These measures, in turn, were criticized by the more moderate elements of the Communist party, known as the Right Opposition, under the leadership of Rykov, president of the Council of People's Commissars, who wished, for the time being, to pro-

38. For recent Soviet labor laws, cf. Great Britain, *A Selection of Documents Relative to Labour Legislation in Force in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* (London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1931), Cmd. 3775, Russia No. 1, 1931.

39. Lenin, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, cited, Vol. XVI, p. 146; Vol. XX, p. 361.

40. *Ibid.*, Vol. XVI, p. 106; Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 143, 200.

41. Leon Trotsky, *The Real Situation in Russia* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1928), p. 60 et seq.

tect the interests of the more prosperous peasants. Stalin, however, denounced the protests of the Right Opposition as inspired by "petty bourgeois sentiments," obtained the recantation of Rykov and his associates in 1929, and proceeded to carry through his policy of collectivization and "liquidation" of the *kulaks*, with the result that over sixty per cent of the country's farms had been collectivized by the end of 1931.<sup>42</sup>

Internal conflicts and resulting modifications of Marxist doctrine, however, have not impaired the outward unity of the Communist party, preserved by a close-knit organization, an "iron" discipline and a strict enforcement of the "party line." Despite a marked increase in numbers during the past year, the Communist party has at present a total membership of only 2,750,000. The relatively slow growth of the party is due, in part, to the rigid conditions required of candidates for admission, and in part to the searching control which the party exercises over its members through periodic investigations of their activities, known as "cleansings," which frequently result in the censure or expulsion of politically "alien" or passive elements.

#### COMPOSITION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The constitution of the party, adopted at its Fourteenth Congress in 1925,<sup>43</sup> draws a sharp distinction between the workers who, according to Communist doctrine, must serve as the vanguard of the proletariat and must form at least fifty-one per cent of the

party,<sup>44</sup> and other groups of the population. Applicants for membership are consequently divided into three categories: 1. workers and Red Army soldiers (sub-divided in turn into two groups—industrial workers engaged in physical labor, and non-industrial workers, including farm hands); 2. peasants and private handicraftsmen; 3. employees, professional men and others. Qualifications for admission range from a six months' period of probation, accompanied by two recommendations from party members of two years' standing for the first group of the first category, to a two-year period of probation and five recommendations from party members of five years' standing for the third category. As a result of this distinction, the percentage of factory workers admitted to the party has steadily increased, while that of peasants and other social groups has correspondingly declined. Of the total membership of the party in 1930, 68.2 per cent were workers, 18.7 peasants, while the rest were drawn from employees and intellectuals.<sup>45</sup>

Members of the Communist party are required not only to obtain a thorough knowledge of Marxist doctrine and to participate in all civic and party activities, but to observe a certain standard of personal conduct as well. They are not permitted to receive a monthly salary exceeding the "party maximum"—225 rubles (\$115)—must abstain from excessive drinking and other indulgences, and must in general serve as an example to the rest of the population. The Communists, regarded as the governing élite, are industriously trained for their manifold tasks in a series of special educational institutions ranging from local schools of "political grammar" to the Communist Academy and the Marx-Engels and Lenin Institutes in Moscow. While both careerists and incompetents may be found in the ranks of the party, Western observers believe that, on the whole, the Communists have shown sustained zeal and enthusiasm, and have willingly served as shock-troops in the new enterprises launched under the Five-Year Plan.

#### The "Komsomol"

The members of the Communist party will gradually be relieved at their posts by the

42. For Stalin's attack on Trotsky and "Trotskyism," cf. Iosif V. Stalin, *Ob Opozitsii: Statii i Rechii, 1921-1927* (Regarding the Opposition: Articles and Speeches, 1921-1927), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1928, and his political report to the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party in 1927, *Piatnadsatyi S'ezd VPK* (Fifteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party), Stenographic Report, Moscow, State Publishing House, 1928, p. 68 et seq. Cf. also N. I. Bukharin, *Partiya i Opozitsionnyi Blok* (The Party and the Opposition Block), Leningrad, "Tribuna," 1927. For a detailed study of Soviet agrarian policy, cf. Vera M. Dean, "Russia's Agrarian Problem," Foreign Policy Association, Information Service, Vol. VI, No. 10, July 23, 1930.

43. *Ustav VPK s Resolutsiami Partys'ezdov, Konferentsii i TSK VPK po Voprosam Partynovogo Stroitelstva* (The Constitution of the All-Union Communist Party with the Resolutions of Party Congresses, Conferences and of the Central Committee of the Party on Questions of Party Construction), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1926. For discussion of various questions concerning the organization of the party, cf. the stenographic reports of the sixteen party congresses, as well as the following: *Rossiiskaya Kommunisticheskaya Partiya v Postanovleniakh ye S'ezdov, 1903-1921* (The Russian Communist Party in the Resolutions of its Congresses, 1903-1921), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1921, and *Rossiiskaya Kommunisticheskaya Partiya v Resolutsiakh ye S'ezdov i Konferentsii, 1898-1927* (The Russian Communist Party in the Resolutions of its Congresses and Conferences, 1898-1927), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1927. For discussion of current questions of party organization, cf. *Partynoe Stroitelstvo* (Party Construction), a semi-monthly organ of the Central Committee of the party; *Pravda* (The Truth), the party's daily organ; and such periodicals as *Bolshevik*.

44. Cf. resolution of the Thirteenth Party Congress, 1924, *Ustav VPK*, cited, p. 106.

45. *Kalendar-Ezhгодnik Kommunist na 1931 God* (Calendar of the Communist for 1931), Moscow, "The Moscow Worker," 1931, p. 351.



new "shift" now trained in the Communist League of Youth (*Komsomol*), composed of 4,500,000 boys and girls between the ages of fourteen and twenty-three. The constitution<sup>46</sup> of the *Komsomol*, like that of the party, draws a distinction between proletarian and non-proletarian elements. Young workers and peasants are admitted without recommendations or previous probation, while youths of non-proletarian origin must undergo a year's probation, and present two recommendations from party or *Komsomol* members of two years' standing. The *Komsomols* are regarded as a leavening element in the young generation, whose vanguard they are destined to become. They are consequently encouraged to perfect their knowledge of Communist doctrine, to improve their health by sports and physical culture, to participate collectively in the political and economic activities of the community in which they live, and to prepare themselves for the defense of the country. While promotion from the *Komsomol* to the party is not automatic, young Communists trained under the Soviet régime, who know little or nothing of the country's pre-revolutionary history and are fired with enthusiasm for the Five-Year Plan, now predominate in the ranks of the party, bringing youthful energy and a boundless faith in ultimate success.

The Young Communists direct the work of their juniors, the Pioneers, an organization of children aged ten to sixteen, numbering over 3,000,000 in 1930, which in turn leads a still younger group, the "Octiabrists,"<sup>47</sup> which includes children from eight to ten years of age.<sup>48</sup> The work of the Pioneers and "Octiabrists," like that of the Young Communists, emphasizes the study of Communist

principles, the performance of "socially useful labor," and elementary military training.

### PARTY ORGANIZATION

The nucleus of the party is the cell (*yacheika*), which must include not less than three party members, and which may be formed either in factory, village or enterprise, or by Communists who are attached to no organized production unit. The function of the cell is to carry out party policies and decisions, to recruit and educate new members, to assist local party committees in propaganda work, and to participate actively in the country's political and economic life. Of a total of 39,321 party cells in 1928, 25.4 per cent were found in factories, 52.7 in villages, 18.5 in offices and enterprises, and 1.8 in educational institutions.<sup>49</sup>

Party cells elect delegates to the higher organs of the party—rural, economic district, county, provincial and regional committees—which correspond to the administrative divisions of the country. From the provincial and regional party congresses delegates are elected to the All-Union party congress, which is usually convoked once every two years<sup>50</sup> and which, according to the party constitution, acts as the supreme organ of authority. The Congress, however, delegates its powers to a Central Committee, which it elects and which represents it during intervals between sessions. The Central Committee is at present composed of seventy-one members, and is divided into three sections: a secretariat; an organization bureau (*Orgbureau*), which is entrusted with administrative functions; and a Political Bureau (*Politbureau*) of nine members, which is concerned with the formulation of party policies.<sup>51</sup> The members of the *Politbureau* are nominally appointed by the Central Committee. In practice, however, their selection

46. *Ustav i Programma Rossiiskovo Leninskovo Kommunisticheskovo Soyuz Molodiozhi* (Constitution and Program of the Russian Leninist Communist League of Youth), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1926. Cf. also Balashov and Nolepin, *VLKSM za Desyat Let v Tsifrakh* (Ten Years of the Russian Leninist Communist League of Youth in Figures), Moscow, "The Young Guard," 1928; Andrei Shokhin, *Kratkii Ocherk Istoriyi Komsomola* (Short Sketch of the History of the *Komsomol*), Moscow, "The Young Guard," 1926; Thomas Woody, *New Minds: New Men?* (New York, Macmillan, 1932), Chapter VI. The *Komsomol* has its own official organ, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, modeled on the party *Pravda*, as well as a number of other newspapers and periodicals.

47. The "Octiabrists," often referred to as "children of the revolution," are named in honor of the October (old style) revolution of 1917. The Pioneers were organized in 1922, and the "Octiabrists" in 1923.

48. Cf. N. K. Krupskaya, *Deti Revolutzii* (The Children of the Revolution), Moscow, "The Young Guard," 1929; Woody, *New Minds: New Men?* cited, Chapter V. A certain overlapping of ages is allowed in all Communist groups, in order that a number of Young Communists may remain as leaders of the Pioneers, and that a number of Pioneers may serve as leaders of the "Octiabrists."

49. All-Union Communist Party, Statistical Department of the Central Committee, *VKP v Tsifrakh* (The All-Union Communist Party in Figures), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1929, p. 13.

50. In the intermediate year, the party usually holds an All-Union party conference which is distinguished from the party congress principally by the fact that, while the latter is composed of delegates elected by the various party organizations, the former is attended only by party officials. The last party conference was held in February 1932.

51. The *Politbureau* is at present composed as follows: Iosif Stalin, Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; Michael Kalinin, senior chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.; Valerian Kuibyshev, president of the State Planning Commission; A. A. Andreyev, People's Commissar for Transportation; Vyacheslav Molotov, president of the Council of People's Commissars; Klimentiy Voroshilov, People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs; Sergey Kirov, Secretary of the Leningrad Regional Committee of the party; Lazar Kaganovich; and Stanislav Kossior, General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the party in the Ukraine.

is determined by Iosif Stalin, Secretary-General of the party since 1922, himself a member of the *Politbureau* who, while he occupies no important post in the government of the Union, exercises a decisive influence on both party and government policy. The *Politbureau* has no published statutes; its meetings, like those of the party congress, are not open to the public; and only its decisions, usually embodied in decrees countersigned by Soviet officials, appear in the Soviet press. It is generally known, however, that all fundamental problems of party and government policy are first threshed out in the *Politbureau*, and that the latter's decisions regarding the "line" which the party will follow on current questions are invariably ratified by the party congress and, between congresses, by the Central Committee, whose plenary sessions are reported by the press. Such far-reaching developments as the introduction of the Five-Year Plan, the "liquidation" of the *kulaks* and the inauguration of a milder policy toward technical experts originated not with the organs of the Soviet government, but with the *Politbureau*, and were actually formulated by Stalin and his closest associates. This predominance of the party over the government, however, creates no real political conflict, since all leading Soviet officials are members of the party, while the majority of the members of the *Politbureau* occupy responsible government positions.<sup>52</sup>

The constitution of the party describes party organization as "democratic centralism," and provides for "complete freedom" of discussion regarding controversial questions.<sup>53</sup> Once a decision has been reached, however, party discipline demands the cessation of discussion, and all party organs, as well as Communist "fractions" in non-party organizations (soviets, trade or professional unions, and cooperative associations), must immediately give effect to party mandates. Failure to follow party directions, and "other offenses recognized as criminal by the public opinion of the party," are investigated by a Central Control Commission, and are subject to penalties ranging from censure to

expulsion from the party. Thus when Trotzky condemned Stalin's policies in 1927, he and some of his associates in the Left Opposition were expelled from the party,<sup>54</sup> and subsequently exiled. Similarly, when Nicholas Bukharin, editor of the Communist organ, *Pravda*, supported the Right Opposition, he was ousted from the *Politbureau* in 1929, and his fate was shared in 1930 by Rykov and Tomsky, chairman of the All-Union Council of Trade Unions, despite their recantation of the "Right heresy." As recently as December 1931 a young Soviet professor, Anatole Slutzky, was expelled from the party on the ground that he had been "smuggling Trotzkyist propaganda" into a Communist periodical, and a new attack against "Trotzkyism" and "rotten liberalism" was launched in the party press.

#### THE "PARTY LINE"

The severe treatment meted out to dissenters by what Trotzky described as the "party bureaucracy" is justified by Communist leaders on the ground that the "monolithic unity" of the party, which serves as a bulwark against capitalist reaction, can be maintained only by strict enforcement of the "Leninist party line." This "line" is not a rigid program which takes no cognizance of change of circumstances, but a flexible set of formulas determined by a concrete "historical situation" and designed to meet the special problems which each situation creates. Competent observers believe that the "party line," while invariably supported by numerous quotations from Lenin's works, represents the policy which Stalin and his associates consider best adapted to existing conditions.

The centralization of party authority in the hands of the *Politbureau*, which Trotzky denounced as contrary to "inter-party democracy,"<sup>55</sup> is regarded by Communist leaders as the only method calculated to establish the leadership of the party and, consequently, of the proletariat, among less class-conscious elements of the population. Only a disciplined, united party, they claim, can give effect to the aspirations of the laboring masses and lead them to decisive victory over capitalism.

52. The organization of the *Komsomol* is modeled on that of the party, with cells, rural, county, economic district, provincial and regional committees and an All-Union *Komsomol* Congress. The Pioneers are organized in brigades and detachments, while the "Octiabrists" are organized in divisions.

53. Cf. also resolution of the *Politbureau* and of the Central Committee, December 5, 1923, *Ustav VKP*, cited, p. 86.

54. Cf. resolution of the Fifteenth Party Congress, approving the decision of the Central Committee to expel Trotzky and his associates from the party. *Piatnadzhatyi Syezd Vse-Soyuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii* (Fifteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party), Stenographic Report, Moscow, State Publishing House, 1928, p. 1317.

55. Trotzky, *The Real Situation in Russia*, cited, p. 111 *et seq.*

### THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

The All-Union Communist party forms a "section" of the Third (Communist) International (*Komintern*), established in 1919 with headquarters in Moscow, in which fifty-eight Communist parties from as many states or colonies are represented.<sup>56</sup> The object of the Third International, according to its constitution, is to struggle with all means at its disposal, including violence, "for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie and the establishment of an international Soviet republic, as a transitional stage toward complete annihilation of the state."<sup>57</sup> The Third International regards the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only institution capable of liberating mankind "from the horrors of capitalism," recognizes the Soviet government as "the historic form" of this dictatorship, and undertakes to support every Soviet republic, "wherever established."<sup>58</sup> The program adopted at the close of the Sixth Congress of the Third International in 1928 declared that Communist aims "can be accomplished only through an overthrow by force of the whole existing social order."<sup>59</sup>

The supreme organ of authority in the Third International, according to its constitution, is the World Congress—which last met in 1928—in which the All-Union Communist party, despite its minority position, exercises a predominant influence. This congress delegates its powers to an Executive Committee of fifty-nine members, which it elects. Of the nine members of the *Polit-bureau*, two—Stalin, Secretary-General of the Communist party, and Molotov, president of the Union Council of People's Commissars—are members of the Executive Committee of

the Third International, while others served as delegates to the Sixth World Congress of the *Komintern*. The decisions of the Executive Committee are binding on all "sections" of the Third International, including the All-Union Communist party, as well as on individual Communists throughout the world. While the All-Union Communist party, like other "sections," contributes dues to the Third International, there is no evidence that the latter receives financial aid from the Soviet government.

### SOVIET POLICY AND THE "KOMINTERN"

The internal conflicts of the All-Union Communist party, the *Komintern's* most active and powerful "section," have been reflected in the Third International, many of whose constituent parties, less disciplined than that of the Soviet Union, have split into Trotsky, Stalin and other factions. The policy of the Third International, however, has in recent years been determined by the Stalin "party line," notably with respect to the imminence of world revolution. The Communist conviction that the World War marked the beginning of a period of world revolution, which would witness the intensification of "capitalist contradictions" and the triumph of the proletariat, was gradually weakened by the failure of Communist uprisings in China and in the colonies. The program of the Sixth Congress of the *Komintern* echoed Stalin's conclusion that capitalism had been temporarily "stabilized," and declared that "the victory of socialism is possible in only a few countries, or even only in one individual country." The Third International thus accepted Stalin's decision that, for the time being at least, the Soviet government should concentrate its efforts not on fomenting revolution abroad, but on the task of "building socialism" at home. The Soviet government, for its part, has made every effort to dissociate its foreign policy, directed at establishing peaceful relations with capitalist states whose economic cooperation is needed for the prosecution of the Five-Year Plan, from the openly anti-capitalist program of the *Komintern*.<sup>60</sup>

56. The *Komsomol* similarly forms a "section" of the Communist Youth International, which is affiliated with the Third International.

57. Constitution of the Third International, adopted at its Fifth Congress in 1924, *Ustav VKP*, cited, p. 165.

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Izvestia*, September 5, 1928. Reports of the first two congresses of the Third International are available in Russian: *Pervyi Kongress Kommunisticheskovo Internatsionala* (First Congress of the Communist International), March 2-19, 1919 (Petrograd, 1921); *Vtoroi Kongress Kommunisticheskovo Internatsionala* (Second Congress of the Communist International), 1920 (Petrograd, 1921). Abridged reports of the Fourth and Fifth Congresses have been issued in English by the Communist Party of Great Britain. Cf. also *The Communist International between the Fifth and Sixth World Congresses, 1924-1928* (London, The Communist Party of Great Britain, 1928). *The Communist International*, the organ of the Third International, is published simultaneously in Russian, German, French and English. Cf. also A. Tivel and M. Kheimo, *Dessyat Let Komintern v Resheniach i Tsifrakh* (Ten Years of the *Komintern* in Decisions and Figures), Moscow, State Publishing House, 1929.

60. The structure of the government of the Soviet Union will be discussed in a report to be published by the Foreign Policy Association on March 30, 1932.